



Jim Doyle  
Governor

Helene Nelson  
Secretary

**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Health and Family Services**

**DIVISION OF DISABILITY AND ELDER SERVICES**

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**Memorandum**

**DATE:** December 29, 2005

**TO:** Area Administrators/Human Services Area Coordinators  
County Departments of Health and Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities Services Directors  
County/Tribal Aging Directors  
DDES Bureau Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
County Departments of Community Programs Directors  
Public Health Department Directors  
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators  
Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management  
County Emergency Management Directors

**FROM:** Oren Hammes, Disaster Mental Health and Emergency  
Human Service Coordinator

**RE:** Disaster Preparedness Checklists

On October 7, 2005 a report was prepared by the Division of Emergency Management and Department of Military Affairs evaluating Wisconsin's emergency preparedness planning and recommending specific action steps the state will take to avoid the mistakes made in the response to Hurricane Katrina. The report, available online at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>, addresses the "Lessons Learned" from Hurricane Katrina and recommendations to better prepare Wisconsin for a disaster and a timetable to implement such action.

In particular, the report to Governor Doyle highlighted the need to prepare citizens and county/tribal human services agencies to address the special needs of Wisconsin citizens who may require additional assistance in the event of a disaster. These individuals include, but are not limited to, persons who have mobility limitations, non-English speaking citizens, the elderly, children, individuals with mental illness, individuals with developmental disabilities, chronically ill patients, and individuals with visual or hearing impairments.

During the past year the Disaster Human Services Project, under contract with the Division of Disability and Elder Services, has developed a number of checklists for use by individuals, health, human service and emergency management agencies to review local disaster planning, response and recovery capabilities. These forms are available online at the following website:

[www.waaoda.org](http://www.waaoda.org) and may be downloaded for use or modification to address the needs of your agency.

Included is a disaster preparedness kit for individuals with special needs. It contains a face page describing the purpose of completing the materials, an emergency information section, and the checklist itself. This kit was designed primarily for personal preparedness planning however, with the permission of the individual completing it, the kit may be shared with a caregiver or family member.

The second checklist addresses local preparedness planning for emergency management, health and human services to address the needs of individuals with special needs. Topics include shelter accessibility, communication requirements, policy/procedure development, response procedures, availability of medical supplies and disaster recovery activities.

I encourage you to make the individual preparedness checklist available to agency clients and staff to increase their awareness and facilitate individual planning. As you review your agency preparedness plans during the upcoming year, please consider incorporating ideas contained in the agency checklist in your work. I would also like to remind you that the staff of the Disaster Human Services Project and myself are available to provide technical assistance and training related to disaster human services emergency planning. Comments regarding these documents and requests for technical assistance or training may be sent to Keith Lang, State Coordinator, Disaster Human Services Project, [langkj@dhfs.state.wi.us](mailto:langkj@dhfs.state.wi.us). Keith can be reached by phone at 608-266-0040.